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BOOKS OF AMERICAN HISTORY

The Economic History of the United States. By ERNEST LUDLOW BOGART, Ph.D., Professor of Economics, University of Illinois. Second edition. (New York, London, Bombay, and Calcutta: Longmans, Green, and Company. 1912. Pp. xvi, 597.)

THE appearance of a new edition of this book calls attention again to the neglect of our economic history by American economists. The first edition appeared six years ago and, excepting the brief and elementary work of Miss Coman, was the only book in its field. It remains to-day in undisturbed possession. The new edition is an improvement upon the first in many particulars. Several subjects very inadequately treated or omitted altogether in the first edition have been more satisfactorily dealt with. Three new chapters have been added: one on Neutrality and Foreign Trade, another on Population and Labor before the Civil War, and a third on Conservation. The chapter on Currency and Banking before the Civil War has been entirely rewritten and is also practically new. In addition to these there are numerous changes in the text all through the volume, many of which involve the rewriting of a paragraph or the insertion of a new one amounting often to a complete modification of the views previously expressed by the author on important subjects. He has evidently made a diligent effort to incorporate into this new edition the results of all studies that have been published since the first edition appeared or that were overlooked in it. These changes have greatly improved the book, but they are not extensive enough to justify the statement that it "may almost be regarded as new". Its plan remains what it was before and its general character has not been changed.

According to the author's view the economic history of the United States is the story of the achievements of a virile, energetic people devoting themselves to the exploitation of rich natural resources, untrammelled by custom, tradition, or political limitations. In telling this story his plan is to trace "the growth of industry [manufactures], agriculture, commerce, transportation, population and labor from the simple, isolated agricultural communities of the colonies to the complex industrial and commercial society of to-day". Each of these topics is dealt with in one or more chapters in the four periods into which he divides our economic history: first, Colonial Development, secondly, the Struggle for Commercial and Economic Independence 1763-1808, thirdly, the Industrial Revolution and Westward Movement 1808-1860, and fourthly, Economic Integration and Industrial Organization 1860-1912. Nearly one-half of the volume is devoted to the last period. Considering the vast field to be covered in the limits of a single volume of less than six hundred pages, the author has been fairly successful in carrying out his plan. There are few important subjects that have not been at least touched upon and he has used all

the best books and secondary material concerning them. There is little evidence of independent investigation of sources where secondary material does not exist or is inadequate for an account. He has brought together into a digest the available information concerning all these subjects and aimed to furnish an explanation of the more important phases of development. This has required an immense amount of careful study and constitutes a service of no small value.

It is easy to point out defects in the book. The most obvious ones arise from the attempt to deal with too many subjects in the space allowed. The result is a narrative which is loose and scrappy, with little reasoned continuity. The important subjects and big events are not made to stand out prominently so as to make clear their significance. It is impossible in a paragraph or two to deal effectively with the African slave-trade so as to show its enormous importance to the whole economy of colonization. An account of the slave system which developed from the spread of cotton culture which fails to consider at length the economic effect upon the South and upon the nation as a whole, must be regarded as very unsatisfactory. Few subjects are of greater importance and interest than the significance of railway construction and railway management in our economic life. Here is the industry in which the development of the corporation may best be traced and where that striking figure in American society, the great captain of industry, first appeared. Here also competition as the regulator of economic affairs first failed, and gave rise to the characteristic economic problem of our time, government regulation of industry. These aspects of the subject are entirely ignored. Still more surprising is the failure to give a good discussion of the influence of the protective tariff policy upon the growth of manufactures, or to consider in the chapters on labor the problems which grew out of emancipation. Another defect is the absence of foot-notes giving specific references for statements of fact and expressions of opinion. It ought to be possible in a book of this kind to see at a glance the sources from which the author has drawn his facts and ideas. The selected list of authorities at the end of each chapter is not sufficiently definite.

GUY S. CALLENDER.

Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts. Volume II. Collections: Massachusetts Royal Commissions, 1681-1774. (Boston: The Society. 1913. Pp. xxxvi, 409.)

THE Colonial Society has finally brought to a successful termination the first part of a plan formed many years ago to print the extant royal commissions and instructions issued to certain of the crown officials of Massachusetts during the period from 1681 to 1774. The first volume containing the commissions is now before us and the second, which will contain the royal instructions issued during the same period, is already provided for. With the completion of this work an undertaking of first